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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PBTS](#) [PHUM](#) [OSCE](#) [UP](#) [KZ](#)  
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: KAZAKHSTAN AND THE 2009 OSCE  
CHAIRMANSHIP-IN-OFFICE

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Sheila S. Gwaltney for reasons 1  
.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) Summary: During a March 2 meeting with U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE Julie Finley, DFM Volodymyr Khandohiy said Ukraine would not actively lobby for the 2009 OSCE Chairmanship in Office, but might consider advancing its candidacy if Kazakhstan were to voluntarily withdraw its bid. End summary.

¶2. (C) Asked by Ambassador Finley about Ukraine's relations with Kazakhstan, Khandohiy said he did not have much to say about the relationship except that it was a normal one and Ukraine had an interest in Kazakh natural gas. A Kazakh company was also one of the bidders to construct an extension to the Odesa-Brody pipeline to Plock in Poland. Ambassador Finley inquired how firm was the Ukrainian government's endorsement of Kazakhstan's bid to be OSCE Chairman in Office in 2009 that had been issued by all participants in the August 2005 Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) summit in Kazan, Georgia. In Ambassador Finley's opinion, Kazakhstan might not be quite ready to be Chairman-in-Office of an organization based on support for democracy and human rights. She noted that her inquiry was only preliminary, since no decision needed to be taken until the OSCE took up the issue of the 2009 chairmanship in December.

¶3. (C) Khandohiy responded warily that President Yushchenko had stressed the importance of good relations with Kazakhstan, especially since Kazakhstan could be a key element in Ukraine's energy security. Ukraine had expressed an interest in assuming the OSCE Chairmanship in Office in 2013 and would prefer to stick to this schedule. If Kazakhstan voluntarily withdrew its candidacy, then Ukraine might consider advancing its bid.

¶4. (C) Ambassador Finley said that, while not wishing to embarrass the Kazakhstan government, she thought that Kazakhstan should have an additional two years to demonstrate its commitment to democratic principles. Words were not enough. If Kazakhstan took appropriate steps to demonstrate its commitment concretely to democratic principles, then the USG would be the first to endorse Kazakhstan's candidacy for OSCE Chairman in Office in 2011. Kazakhstan needed to develop a way to gracefully remove itself from the running for Chairman-in-Office, which could be done as late as September, Ambassador Finley commented. Kazakhstan's President Nazarbayev could say that, while Kazakhstan remained extremely interested in assuming greater leadership within OSCE, the demands of economic development and democratic reform precluded assuming the OSCE Chairmanship in Office in 2009. Khandohiy said he understood and thanked Ambassador Finley for her suggestion, which was "worth discussing."

¶5. (U) Ambassador Finley cleared this cable.

16. (U) Visit Embassy Kiev's classified website:  
[www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev).  
Herbst